

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Progress Toward Proficiency 2014

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 158.6453

History/Background:

Existing Policy. The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) established a state assessment and accountability program with the first assessment administered in spring 1992. Over the years action by the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) and state legislature have modified the assessments and the calculations for accountability; however, the focus has remained primarily a school-based accountability system with high-stakes recognition and sanctions attached to results. KBE adopted a growth model with performance of schools serving as their own baseline. All students and thus all schools are expected to demonstrate improvement within the system.

KBE has established the goal of proficiency for all Kentucky schools by 2014. Through the work of educators and citizens of Kentucky, proficiency has been described for a school as an Accountability Index of 100. The accountability system provides a metric for measuring progress toward the long-term proficiency goal.

The Kentucky Accountability Index includes both academic content-based and non-academic measures. The academic content measures are reported in an Academic Index based on student performance on custom, criterion-referenced Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) in reading, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, practical living/vocational studies and writing. Each KCCT Academic Index is generated from the percentages of students scoring at each performance or achievement standard—Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished. Also reported in 2006 as an academic measure were the results of a nationally norm-referenced test in mathematics and reading at grades 3, 6 and 9. Non-academic measures reported include attendance, retention, dropout and transition to adult life rates.

Every two years the Accountability Index is combined and plotted on a customized Growth Chart for each public school and district. Based on this biennial performance and its relationship to the customized biennial goal, schools receive one of three performance judgments—Meeting Goal, Progressing or Assistance. When reported, the Progressing performance category is further divided to include a Progressing but Declining designation to highlight schools that are in the Progressing performance category, but have an Accountability Index lower than the previous biennium.

Additionally, CATS reporting includes how schools and districts are meeting dropout and novice reduction targets. Schools and districts have individual annual targets for reducing the percentage of students performing at the Novice level. The final goal for schools and districts is to have no greater than five percent (5%) of students performing at the Novice level in 2014. With regard to the dropout criteria in 2006, high schools must have a dropout rate less than or equal to 5.3%, or reduce their dropout rate by 0.5% from the previous biennium and still have a dropout rate less than or equal to 6.0%.

Reporting for the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) in 2006 was based on 703 KAR 5:020 before its recent revision. In February 2007, KBE gave final approval to revisions of 703 KAR 5:020. The changes in the regulation impact the accountability formula and will change the reporting of CATS results in fall 2007. For example, additional grades will be included in reporting for Reading and Mathematics, the weights of content areas, non-academic measures and the norm-referenced component in the accountability system have changed. Instead of reporting a norm-referenced index at high school, an ACT index will be reported on the PLAN assessment administered in September 2006. Elementary and middle schools will test and report norm-referenced results, but these results will not be included in the accountability index at elementary and middle levels.

As 2014 quickly approaches and substantive revisions have been made to the state assessment and accountability system, it is critical for the Kentucky Board of Education to know where Kentucky schools are currently performing on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System.

In 2006, the following performance classifications were seen for all 1108 Kentucky schools:

- 568 schools (51.26%) are in the Meet Goal Classification
 - 558 schools met goal and the novice reduction and dropout targets
 - 10 schools met goal, but did not meet novice reduction targets
- 408 schools (36.82%) are in the Progressing Classification
 - 197 schools were Progressing and met novice reduction and dropout targets
 - 5 schools were Progressing, but did not meet novice reduction and dropout targets
 - 5 schools did not meet dropout targets
 - 201 schools did not meet novice reduction targets
- 91 schools (8.21%) are in the Progressing Classification, but Declining
 - 41 schools are in the Progressing Classification, but have declined with an accountability index lower than the previous biennium
 - 1 school is in the Progressing Classification, but declined from the previous biennium and did not meet novice reduction and dropout targets
 - 49 schools are in the Progressing Classification, but declined from the previous biennium and did not meet novice reduction goals
- 41 schools (3.7%) are in the Assistance Classification

Using the same performance categories and information on dropout and novice reduction targets listed above, Attachment A provides a chart comparison of 2006 results for all elementary, middle, high and combined schools. A combined school includes grades that cross the traditional elementary, middle and high school grade configurations. For example, schools that have K-8 or 7-12 grade arrangements are combined schools.

Attachment B provides projected performance data for 1029 schools that have had stable reporting configurations since 1999. New schools without long-term trend data are not included in this example. The first page of Attachment B organizes schools into six groupings by the biennial accountability index and plots the mean or average growth in 2000 and 2006 for each group and projects performance in 2014. The six groups of schools by biennial accountability indices are:

1. less than 60,
2. between 60 and 64.9,
3. between 65 and 69.9,
4. between 70 and 74.9,
5. between 75 and 79.9, and
6. greater than or equal to 80.

Using a regression model on **each** of the 1029 schools with stable data configurations, it is projected that 382 schools or 37.12% will be in the Meeting Goal Classification, 513 schools or 49.85% will be in the Progressing Classification and 134 schools or 13.02% will be in the Assistance Classification. The second page of Attachment B displays both current and projected performance for the 1029 schools with stable grade configurations since 1999.

A PowerPoint presentation at the KBE meeting will further highlight the current performance of Kentucky schools in the state assessment and accountability system. A preliminary PowerPoint is included as Attachment C to assist with member preparation for this KBE discussion. The PowerPoint also includes charts reflecting gaps and gains in performance for the three largest subpopulations organized by grade level (elementary, middle and high school).

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

The Kentucky Board of Education remains diligent in its focus on Kentucky schools and all students reaching proficiency. The Board must know current and projected performance of Kentucky schools as it initiates programs and supports to assist schools in reaching this proficiency standard and to ensure that every child in Kentucky is proficient and prepared for success.

Current assistance efforts to support low performing schools and districts implemented by KDE include provision of school improvements funds to support transformation plans, the placement of High Skilled Educators, work of Achievement Gap Coordinators, and a district level Voluntary Assistance Audit. The next discussion for the Kentucky Board of

Education in June will be on how to focus the resources available to move more Kentucky schools and districts to proficiency by 2014.

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